



WSSD PREPCOM IV HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 31 MAY 2002

Delegates convened for a morning Plenary to hear presentations by the Co-Chairs of Working Groups I and II on the progress of each group, and to consider the accreditation of IGOs and NGOs. An Informal Plenary combining Working Groups I and II was held in the afternoon and evening in an effort to resolve bracketed text. Working Group III convened in the afternoon and into the evening. Contact groups on Africa, energy, oceans, and finance continued to meet throughout the day, with some groups meeting in the evening.

Editor's Note: Coverage of the sessions ended at 6:00 pm.

PLENARY

PrepCom Chair Emil Salim (Indonesia) proposed and delegates accredited to the WSSD, two intergovernmental organizations, the Pacific Center for Environment and Sustainable Development and the Center for International Forestry Research. He then invited delegates to consider the accreditation postponed on Monday, 27 May, of the NGO Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, drawing attention to annex II of document A/CONF.199/PC/20 and a letter from China on this issue submitted to the UN Secretary-General (A/CONF.199/PC/19). Supporting the accreditation of the NGO, the US stated that all legitimate NGOs should be accredited, and the EU and associated countries said the right to express views is an aspect of international democracy. CHINA called for a roll call vote for no action, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the functional commission of ECOSOC, noting that the Tibetan Centre's activities, *inter alia*, contravene the UN Charter. In accordance with Rule 49 of the rules of procedure, two delegations, PAKISTAN and CUBA, supported China's motion, while the US and the EU opposed. Chair Salim called a roll call vote, the motion was carried, and the accreditation of the Tibetan Centre was rejected. After the vote, Chair Salim asked the Working Group Chairs to give progress reports.

PROGRESS REPORTS: On behalf of Working Group I, Kiyotaka Akasaka (Japan) explained that about 80 percent of the text is agreed (A/CONF.199/PC/WG.I/2), but additional time is needed for consideration of contentious issues, specifically energy and oceans. Several issues remain in brackets, including: how to deal with the issue of common but differentiated responsibilities; technical and financial assistance, as this is being discussed in Working Group II on trade-related subsidies; and whether to use

the term "launch" or "promote" in various paragraphs. Akasaka expressed hope that the Working Group will be able to resolve the outstanding issues.

Richard Ballhorn (Canada) provided a report of the progress made in Working Group II (A/CONF.199/PC/WG.II/2). He identified remaining unresolved issues, specifically trade and finance and sustainable development for Africa, which are being considered in contact groups. He noted new paragraphs that were proposed from other regional groups, specifically, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and Pacific, and the UNECE, focusing on Central and Eastern Europe.

In closing, Chair Salim explained that the Plenary would, in the afternoon, transform into an Informal Plenary combining the efforts of Working Groups I and II to resolve the outstanding issues, and that the contact groups on Africa, energy, oceans, and finance and trade would continue meeting to resolve these issues.

INFORMAL PLENARY

Opening the Informal Plenary, Chair Salim stated that it would begin consideration of the updated *Revised Chairman's Paper*, concentrating on points where consensus is required. He invited delegates to begin by considering the section on poverty eradication addressed by Working Group I (A/CONF.199/PC/WG.I/2), since delegates were in the process of consulting with their capitals on the introductory paragraphs on: a commitment to undertake concrete measures "bearing in mind the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities"; respect for human rights and cultural diversity as essential for achieving sustainable development; the urgent need to put an end to the adoption and application of unilateral coercive measures inconsistent with the UN Charter; the need to end, *inter alia*, foreign occupation in order to achieve sustainable development; and an acknowledgement of the importance of ethics for sustainable development.

POVERTY ERADICATION: Delegates agreed without objection to all the paragraphs that were agreed in the Working Group. They also accepted text on the achievement of sustainable development goals related to, *inter alia*, Agenda 21 and other "relevant" UN conferences and the increase of access to sanitation to improve human health and reduce infant and child mortality.

Agreement on some paragraphs was deferred pending consideration of related sections on: the provision of adequate and predictable financial resources to implement the UN Convention to Combat Desertification; halving by 2015 the proportion of people

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lacking access to improved sanitation; and women's access to, *inter alia*, health care and services. The US, with AUSTRALIA, and opposed by the G-77/CHINA, noted that the target on access to sanitation was a cross-cutting issue and needed to be examined in conjunction with similar targets in the entire text. The EU objected to the establishment of a World Solidarity Fund, as its specifics of poverty eradication were vague, and NORWAY urged deferment of discussion on developing policies and ways to improve the situation of indigenous people and their communities. Chair Salim deferred discussion on energy pending the outcome of the contact group considering this issue.

On the contribution of industrial development to poverty eradication, delegates agreed on the chapeau and all subparagraphs in the section, except one on provision of assistance to increase income generating employment opportunities respecting International Labour Organization core labor standards, which the G-77/CHINA opposed. Delegates also accepted the chapeau and all subparagraphs on achieving significant improvement, by 2020, in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, as proposed in the Cities Alliances' "Cities Without Slums" initiative.

CHANGING UNSUSTAINABLE PATTERNS OF CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION: In a paragraph on fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume, delegates could not agree on whether to include a reference to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The US and JAPAN wanted to look at all formulations of the principle, while the G-77/CHINA called attention to relevant wording in GA Resolution 55/199.

SWEDEN, who had facilitated an "in the corridors" group on a paragraph regarding developing a programme on resource efficiency, reported that the group could not resolve its numerous differences. NEW ZEALAND also reported that "in the corridors" discussions of developing consumer information tools were inconclusive. Delegates could not reach agreement on a reference to the life-cycle approach, with the G-77/CHINA insisting on its deletion, and the EU, JAPAN, NORWAY and SWITZERLAND supporting its retention. Delegates also disagreed on the alternative paragraph on improving the efficiency and productivity of energy, water and materials.

Delegates accepted a number of paragraphs on: increasing investment in cleaner production and eco-efficiency in all countries; integrating issues of production and consumption patterns into sustainable development policies; enhancing corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability; and encouraging relevant authorities at all levels to take sustainable development considerations into account in decision making.

Salim's proposal on the provision to develop "environmentally friendly vehicles which are fuel efficient by all, in particular developing countries," was supported by JAPAN, the US, and the EU, and opposed by G-77/CHINA. SWITZERLAND, who is leading "in the corridor" consultations on chemicals issues, stated that five issues were still pending consensus, adding that consultations may extend into the following week. Delegates agreed to specify the Basel Convention in text on preventing international illegal trafficking of hazardous chemicals.

PROTECTING AND MANAGING THE NATURAL RESOURCE BASE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Delegates could not agree on whether loss of natural resources should be "halted" or "reversed," whether to "launch a programme of actions" or "launch action programmes" to achieve the Millennium Development goal on safe drinking water, and whether to tie these actions with a goal on improved sanitation. The US preferred discussing collectively all references in the *Paper* to: new and additional financial resources; technical and financial support; and technological, technical and financial assistance.

Delegates accepted paragraphs on: water management and efficiency plans; support for efforts to monitor and assess the quantity and quality of water resources; coordination among the various international and intergovernmental bodies and processes working on water-related issues; and an integrated, multi-hazard, inclusive approach to address vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management. After discussions, delegates agreed to a paragraph on assessing "the" effects of climate change, deleting the options of "adverse" and "any" effects.

WORKING GROUP III

The Working Group, co-chaired by Ositadinma Anaedu (Nigeria) and Lars-Göran Engfeldt (Sweden), resumed negotiation of the Vice-Chairs' text of 27 May, *Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Development*, in afternoon and evening sessions. The Chair offered compromise texts of some previously discussed paragraphs. The Group agreed on the paragraph dealing with the integration of implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the WSSD in the work programmes of UN agencies and other institutions. Two paragraphs related to financial issues were moved to the contact group on trade and finance.

Most paragraphs were left pending. There was extensive discussion on how to reflect the decision of the Seventh Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/Third Global Ministerial Environment Forum regarding the Council's future membership, with the US and the G-77/CHINA objecting to mentioning the issue of "universal membership," and CANADA and the EU preferring a reference. The paragraph on a UN convention against corruption was again objected to by the G-77/CHINA, "because the issue was not mentioned in Agenda 21," but the EU, NORWAY, the US and a number of others supported the text. The US argued against text mentioning "significant" support for the UNDP Capacity 21 programme, as proposed by the G-77/CHINA.

There was agreement on text relating to agencies that should strengthen their contribution to sustainable development programmes, in particular in capacity building.

In the paragraph on the role of the UN General Assembly, the G-77/CHINA, the US and CANADA requested dropping reference to a "tri-annual comprehensive policy review" by the GA, and the G-77/CHINA, supported by the EU, proposed including a reference to the economic, social and environmental pillars. Differences remained on whether to retain or delete reference to sustainable development as "the overarching framework for UN activities" with the G-77/CHINA insisting on its deletion, and on moving the GA's Third Committee mandate on social issues to the Second Committee. The EU remains the only delegation in favor of the latter proposal. The EU text on "deepening understanding of sustainable development" and streamlining national reporting in the GA remains in brackets.



CONTACT GROUPS

AFRICA: Facilitated by Richard Ballhorn (Canada), the group discussed various amendments, with one delegation emphasizing country-led and country-owned processes such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers in a number of paragraphs. There was no agreement on a reference to protection of human rights. Delegates agreed on a paragraph regarding early response to emerging conflict situations, but deferred discussion on its placement. The group also reach agreement on some of the outstanding issues regarding industrial productivity, the mining and metals industry, and programmes on the marine and coastal environment.

OCEANS: Facilitated by Guy O'Brien (Australia), this group completed its work following a morning and a brief afternoon session. Consensus was reached on the issue of establishing marine protected areas, and on including "coral reefs and wetlands" in programmes to halt marine biodiversity loss. Delegates continued to disagree on issues of coordination and cooperation on ocean issues, and on ratifying and implementing unspecified conventions and related instruments enhancing marine environment protection from marine pollution and environmental damage caused by ships. Delegates neared, but did not reach, consensus on reference to allocation of access rights to high seas stocks. Regarding the issue of conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, calls for reference to Agenda 21 language by some delegations, were met with requests for reference to specific paragraphs to clarify the contexts in which the language is used.

ENERGY: Facilitated by Gustavo Ainchil (Argentina), the contact group on energy met in afternoon and evening sessions to continue discussion of contentious issues, working from a revised text. Controversy remained over formulation of the reference to specific types of energy. One delegation proposed new text calling to adopt at the national level, timetables for progressively phasing out harmful energy subsidies, except those targeted directly at poor and low-income people and least developed countries. Delegations also debated language referring to partnerships.

FINANCE: Chaired by John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda), this group met in the morning, afternoon and evening to continue consideration of the facilitator's draft on means of implementation (A/CONF.199/PC/WGII/CG/Finance and Trade), specifically focusing on finance and trade. Delegates conducted a paragraph-by-paragraph reading of the text, making several amendments and introducing alternative texts. The issues covered include the creation of enabling domestic environments for mobilization of domestic resources, international financial architecture and volatility of short-term capital flows, the third replenishment of the Global Environment Facility, debt and debt restructuring, increases in foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, market access, capacity building to implement the outcomes of the Doha Ministerial Conference and tariff reduction.

Many of the amendments aimed to align text to the Doha WTO Ministerial Declaration and/or the Monterrey Consensus. Among the contentious issues were proposals specifying: new and innovative instruments to address debt; a mix of instruments to redress debts other than those covered by the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and failure to mention the HIPC in this section; market access that would not amount to preferential treatment of developing country goods; the elimination of unilateral trade sanctions; and a call for commitments to the Doha Ministerial Declaration.

IN THE CORRIDORS I

While negotiations in Bali continue slowly, there are growing concerns in New York about the fate of the WSSD. Reliable sources say that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan does not want to see another conference failure in South Africa, especially after last year's debacle at the racism conference in Durban. Consequently, there have been discussions, including during a meeting on Thursday, 30 May, on how to "salvage" the WSSD, raise the Summit's profile in a positive way and better ensure high-level attendance. One option considered is the possibility of identifying one or several eminent people to be "cheerleaders" for the WSSD, meeting with Heads of State and encouraging them to go to Johannesburg. However, for this to work, the documents coming out of Bali have to be equally persuasive.

In the face of growing skepticism about the Summit, there has also been talk about shifting the perceived focus of the Summit to encourage more media coverage. It is hoped that a media "spin" showcasing true Agenda 21 implementation on the ground and other sustainable development success stories may shift lacklustre public opinion. If this were to happen, the Summit's success will not be measured only by the content of the negotiated documents and the attendance of more than 100 Heads of State.

IN THE CORRIDORS II

As trade-offs on issues begin, some participants expressed frustration at the progress in the negotiations in the finance group. During the informal-informal consultations, some participants were stunned when, following attempts to include a provision calling for the realization of the pledges made at Monterrey, they were rebutted on the grounds that these pledges were not documented in Monterrey, prompting one participant to lament about the "cherry picking" from commitments made at Monterrey.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

INFORMAL PLENARY: The Informal Plenary will reconvene in Nusantara 1 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, 3:00 – 6:00 pm and 8:00 – 11:00 pm to conclude consideration of the outstanding issues in Chapters I-IX of the updated *Revised Chairman's Paper*.

WORKING GROUP III: The Working Group will meet in the Geneva Room from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, 3:00 – 6:00 pm and 8:00 – 11:00 pm to continue consideration of the Vice-Chair's paper on an institutional framework for sustainable development.

CONTACT GROUPS: Informal-informal consultations will continue in the contact groups finance and Africa. The contact group on finance and trade will meet from 3:00 – 6:00 pm and 8:00 – 11:00 pm in the Frangipani room to continue consideration of the facilitators text on these sections. The group on Africa will meet in a brief morning session from 10:00 am in Nusantara 2 to complete consideration of this section.



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